



JUNE 2014 NEWSPAPER



LESLIE FEINBERG INTERVIEWS SYLVIA RIVERA 'I'M GLAD I WAS IN THE STONEWALL RIOT'

I left home at age 10 in 1961. I hustled on 42nd Street. The early 60s was not a good time for drag queens, effeminate boys or boys that wore makeup like we did. Back then we were beat up by the police, by everybody. I didn't really come out as a drag queen until the late 60s.

When drag queens were arrested, what degradation there was. I remember the first time I got arrested, I wasn't even in full drag. I was walking down the street and the cops just snatched me. We always felt that the police were the real enemy. We expected nothing better than to be treated like we were animals-and we were. We were stuck in a bullpen like a bunch of freaks. We were disrespected. A lot of us were beaten up and raped. When I ended up going to jail, to do 90 days, they tried to rape me. I very nicely bit the shit out of a man.

I've been through it all.

In 1969, the night of the Stonewall riot, was a very hot, muggy night. We were in the Stonewall [bar] and the lights came on. We all stopped dancing. The police came in.

They had gotten their payoff earlier in the week. But Inspector Pine came in-him and his morals squad-to spend more of the government's money.

We were led out of the bar and they catted us all up against the police vans. The cops pushed us up against the grates and the fences. People started throwing pennies, nickels, and quarters at the cops. And then the bottles started. And then we finally had the morals squad barricaded in the Stonewall building, because they were actually afraid of us at that time. They didn't know we were going to react that way.

We were not taking any more of this shit. We had done so much for other movements. It was time. It was street gay people from the Village out front-homeless people who lived in the park in Sheridan Square outside the bar-and then drag queens behind them and everybody behind us. The Stonewall Inn telephone lines were cut and they were left in the dark.

One Village Voice reporter was in the bar at that time. And according to the archives of the Village Voice, he was handed a gun from Inspector Pine and told, "We got to fight our way out of there."

This was after one Molotov cocktail was thrown and we were ramming the door of the Stonewall bar with an uprooted parking meter. So they were ready to come out shooting that night.

Finally the Tactical Police Force showed up after 45 minutes. A lot of people forget that for 45 minutes we had them trapped in there.

All of us were working for so many movements at that time. Everyone was involved with the women's movement, the peace movement, the civil-rights movement. We were all radicals. I believe that's what brought



Sylvia Rivera of STAR at Bellevue Hospital demonstration, Fall 1970

it around.

You get tired of being just pushed around.

STAR came about after a sit-in at Wein stein Hall at New York University in 1970. Later we had a chapter in New York, one in Chicago, one in California and England. STAR was for the street gay people, the street homeless people and anybody that needed help at that time. Marsha and I had always sneaked people into our hotel rooms. Marsha and I decided to get a building. We were trying to get away from the Mafia's control at the bars.

We got a building at 213 East 2nd Street. Marsha and I just decided it was time to help each other and help our other kids. We fed people and clothed people. We kept the building going. We went out and hustled the streets. We paid the rent.

We didn't want the kids out in the streets hustling. They would go out and rip off food. There was always food in the house and everyone had fun. It lasted for two or three years. We would sit there and ask, "Why do we suffer?" As we got more involved into the movements, we said, "Why do we always got to take the brunt of this shit?"

Later on, when the Young Lords [revolutionary Puerto Rican youth group] came about in New York City, I was already in GLF [Gay Liberation Front]. There was a mass demonstration that started in East Harlem in the fall of 1970. The protest was against police repression and we decided to join the demonstration with our STAR banner.

That was one of first times the STAR banner was shown in public, where STAR was present as a group. I ended up meeting some of the Young Lords that day. I became one of them. Any time they needed any help, I was always there for the Young Lords. It was just the respect they gave us as human beings. They gave us a lot of respect.

It was a fabulous feeling for me to be myself-being part of the Young Lords as a drag queen-and my organization [STAR] being part of the Young Lords. I met [Black Panther Party leader] Huey Newton at the Peoples' Revolutionary Convention in Philadelphia in 1971. Huey decided we were part of the revolution-that we were revolutionary people.

I was a radical, a revolutionist. I am still a revolutionist. I was proud to make the road and help change laws and what-not. I was very proud of doing that and proud of what I'm still doing, no matter what it takes.

Today, we have to fight back against the government. We have to fight them back. They're cutting back Medicaid, cutting back on medicine for people with AIDS. They want to take away from women on welfare and put them into that little work program. They're going to cut SSI.

Continued on Page 8...

¡EL PERIÓDICO DE BLACK AND PINK AHORA DISPONIBLE EN ESPAÑOL! / BLACK AND PINK NEWSPAPER NOW AVAILABLE IN SPANISH!

La policia, los tribunales, y el sistema de prisiones en los Estados Unidos acosa a gente de color, particularmente a gente negra, latin@, arabe, o indígena. Casi 1 al 3 de los prisioneros hablan español como lengua materna. Queremos que nuestro periódico sea lo más disponible posible para cualquiera persona quien quiera leerlo. Somos una familia más fuerte cuando más gente nos pueden entender.

The US police, court, and prison system targets people of color, particularly Black, Latin@, Arab, and Indigenous/American Indian people. Nearly 1 in 3 prisoners' first language is Spanish. We want our newspaper to be as available as possible to everyone who wants to read it. We are a stronger family when more people can understand us.

Por favor, avisen a todos sus amigos lesbiana, gay, bisexual, transgenero, o kuir/queer quisieran recibir un periódico en espanol. Pueden escribir a:

**Black and Pink - Spanish Newspaper
614 Columbia Rd.
Dorchester, MA 02125**

Please tell all your Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and/or Queer friends who would like a newspaper in Spanish to write to:

**Black and Pink - Spanish Newspaper
614 Columbia Rd.
Dorchester, MA 02125**

SEND US YOUR HEADER ART!

Black and Pink wants to use your art as a newspaper header! We'll feature a different artist each month! Send us a drawing that says, "Black & Pink" or "Black and Pink."

Images should be no bigger than 10 inches in length and 3.5 inches in height. Smaller or larger images may be resized to fit.

This month's header is by **Adam in Indiana!**

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Statement of Purpose

Black & Pink is an open family of LGBTQ prisoners and “free world” allies who support each other. Our work toward the abolition of the prison industrial complex is rooted in the experience of currently and formerly incarcerated people. We are outraged by the specific violence of the prison industrial complex against LGBTQ people, and respond through advocacy, education, direct service, and organizing.

Black & Pink is proudly a family of people of all races.

About this Newspaper

Since 2007, Black & Pink free world volunteers have pulled together a monthly newspaper primarily composed of material written by our family’s incarcerated members. In response to letters we receive, more prisoners receive the newspaper each issue!

This month, the newspaper is being sent to: **5,470** prisoners!

Disclaimer:

Please note that the ideas and opinions expressed in the Black & Pink Newspaper are solely those of the authors and artists and do not necessarily reflect the views of Black & Pink. Black & Pink makes no representations as to the accuracy of any statements made in the Newspaper, including but not limited to legal and medical information. Authors and artists bear sole responsibility for their work. Everything published in the Newspaper is also on the internet—it can be seen by anyone with a computer. By sending a letter to “Newspaper Submissions,” you are agreeing to have your piece in the Newspaper and on the internet. For this reason, we only publish First Names and State Location to respect people’s privacy. Pieces may be edited to fit our anti-oppression values and based on our Editing Guidelines.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS TO HOT PINK!

Seeking erotic short stories, poems, AND ART by Black & Pink incarcerated and free-world family members for a new 'zine. To be mailed, art cannot include full nudity. Please send submissions (and shout outs to the authors from the first issue mailed in January!) addressed to Black & Pink - HOT PINK. This is a voluntary project, and no money will be offered for submissions, but you might get the chance to share your spicy story with many others! The zine will be sent 1-2 times per year. To subscribe to receive a copy of HOT PINK twice a year, write to our address, Black & Pink - GENERAL.

A MESSAGE FROM JASON

Dear friends,

I hope this note finds you as well as possible. Every June as I write my letter for the newspaper I think about how the early Gay Pride marches went by the jails in New York City, Boston, and Los Angeles (and other places as well I’m sure). I think about how Pride month has been watered down so much and many on the outside don’t remember where our struggle came from who our true leaders are. As we enter Pride month know that you are not forgotten by the free world members of the Black and Pink family and we will do what we can to make sure others on the outside are reminded as well.

Before sharing some of my general reflections on Pride month I wanted to take a moment to address something that has come up in two issues of the newspaper as of late. There were two separate letters from incarcerated family members who wrote about contracting HIV and their anger at the people who they contracted the virus from. I want to, of course, honor the anger that these two writers have. As an HIV negative person I cannot, at this point, know what it is like to receive a positive diagnosis. However, I feel the need to remind us all that the cure for HIV is not in the demonization or blaming of people living with the virus. Did you know that, according to the Center for Disease Control, 1 in 6 people living with HIV do not know that they are infected? Did you know that of those who know they are living with HIV only 25% are able to successfully keep their virus control under treatment? Did you know that even though Black and Latino people are at higher risk for contracting HIV, even though they have similar rates of higher risk sex, simply because there are more people in Black and Latino communities living with HIV? When we talk about HIV transmission it is so important that we look at it on a structural level. HIV transmission has much more to do with racism, access to health care, access to resources, and community connections than it does with personal choices and personal responsibility. Again, I want to honor peoples’ stories of anger those who contracted HIV are sharing, and I want to acknowledge that there is always more going on.

As June is Pride month I want to do some celebrating of our LGBTQ family. Firstly I want to celebrate all of you, the incarcerated family members of Black and Pink. I want to celebrate you, in part, because you have grown our family so much over the last year. The far majority of folks who receive our newspaper, over 5,000, have heard about it through word of mouth. You all believe that our newspaper has a power that is important. You all contribute your own stories to make the words important. I celebrate you all for making Black and Pink the largest, ever, organization of LGBTQ prisoners and free world allies. I also want to celebrate you for your resistance, survival, and willingness to take risks. I know that receiving LGBTQ material that is seen by mail room staff and others can be a risk. You each are part of our growing efforts to whittle away the power of these prisons.

I also want to take a moment to celebrate our growth on the outside of the walls. Volunteer efforts in the “free world” have made it so that we are getting to your letters much faster. We have a growing number of people becoming pen pals. We are showing up at more and more events. We have chapters popping up around the country with people ready to take on efforts meeting the needs of people incarcerated in their area. Guided by your feedback slips, the chapters are figuring out how to follow the leadership of our incarcerated family. As we grow we are still limited. We are still figuring out how to meet more of the advocacy requests. We are still 2+ months behind in our general mail processing. We are far from our end goal of abolition, but we in the “free world” are glad to be fighting alongside those of you on the inside.

We celebrate Pride month remembering one of those who participated in the Stonewall Uprising, Sylvia Rivera, who said, “I was a radical, a revolutionist. I am still a revolutionist. I was proud to make the road and help change laws and what-not. I was very proud of doing that and proud of what I’m still doing, no matter what it takes.” We keep the fight going knowing that once there were no prisons, that day will come again. In loving solidarity, Jason

THE OUT FOR CHANGE: TRANSFORMATIVE MEDIA ORGANIZING PROJECT

This year, Black & Pink is participating in the Out for Change Transformative Media Organizing Project (OCTOP). The project connects LGBTQ, Two-Spirit, and allied media makers, online organizers, and tech-activists across the United States. The project is supported by faculty and staff at the MIT Center for Civic Media, Research Action Design, and the Ford Foundation’s Advancing LGBT Rights Initiative.

Black & Pink uses transformative media every month through this newspaper! The Black & Pink family shares stories that help organize and build our community through the newspaper, which is printed in the paper and online. In January, Black & Pink gave a presentation for OCTOP on our pen pal program for activists all over the country. As part of the presentation we asked questions and learned about the exciting work going on and how we can collaborate! Here are some of those thoughts:

M, Freedom Inc (WI): We work with many youth who are involved in juvenile injustice system. we also work with adults who were formerly incarcerated. we could offer the opp to our member/base. i think it would also be powerful to teach them the strategies and importance of [Black & Pink’s] work, so that they can support their own family members.

Dawn Marie, GSA Network (CA): We work with students who are pushed out of the educational system and pushed into the juvenile justice system. students are usually folks of color and apart of the lgbtq population. we can create a pen pal program at our GSA leadership summits, either via social media or letter writing

Karla, INCITE! (CA): We could connect with Black & Pink to link our members to this program and lift up this work within our network with the hopes of being connected with women and trans folk of color that are incarcerated. We can build it in our website too so folk can directly link onto the pen pal program through our site as well. We def would like to link up with other folk/orgs who have national/transnational networks on how they are working around communication that needs to be more internal but put out to the whole network.

Luis, Queer Undocumented Immigrant Project (CA): if there is anyone in a detention center that needs help stopping a deportation, there are leads within [United We Dream] that do keep in touch with those who have a way to communicate with those who need help stopping a deportation and the campaign that might be developed to achieve that however it is very difficult. we can always offer this on our weekly calls and even on our retreats just to see if any of quips member are interested in joining and becoming [a] pen pal. I feel that many might really be interested since a lot of them have been exposed to having someone they know or a family or relative in a detention center.

Andrea, Streetwise and Safe (NY):

Youth leaders in our organization are heavily policed and sometimes court involved. Some are formerly incarcerated. We also just filed a case on behalf of a queer youth who was abused in the city jail system. We stay in touch through biweekly meetings and a listserve. The PIC affects our work because our leadership development and campaign work can be interrupted when folks get locked up - and of course it affects everyone’s lives in different ways through relationships with friends, family, past experiences, etc. We could let folks know about the program through our bi-weekly meetings - one of our leaders already writes to trans folks in prison on her own! Maybe work with her to do a workshop on how and why to write with folks? We could also provide postage.

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Dear Black & Pink,

Hello friends, family, and fellow struggling prisoners. I write with a sad heart and sick stomach. The Protection Unit I’m housed at has so very many problems with areas ranging from housing to civil rights violations, due process violations, medical negligence and malpractice, discrimination, and religious rights denials. This crap goes on almost every day because it’s a private prison and ‘cause nobody here will stand up and file grievances or follow through with them, let alone any type of civil actions. Everybody here complains and gripes about things, but they’re not willing to stand up for one another even to save their own hides.

An example, staff here recently allowed General Population inmates into the Protective Custody Unit with hammers and screwdrivers in hand. While they were walking freely around the pod like this, staff went around opening P.C. cell doors for the nurse to give out medication! They even took a few P.C. inmates out of their cells while G.P. guys stood in our pod with tools in hand! Nobody filed any grievances or wrote any letters but for one person. He was the only guy to stand up for the P.C. Unit as a whole. What sense does this make? How can anyone complain about things and not do anything to change it? Instead they all hide and cower down to this place and say, “Someone else needs to speak up, not me!” This is just sad to see go on here.

If P.C. inmates would pull together and have any kind of guts and unity, we could run our own facility where we could be cooking our own food instead of G.P. inmates cooking and serving it to us with sh**, cum, and glass in it! We could go outside when we wanted and have a whole better life than the oppressive, discriminatory one we have here. A lot of staff believes if you’re on P.C. it’s because you abused a child and they view you as a total piece of crap.

All of you who are in a same or like struggle where you are housed, always keep your head up and never back down, even if it is just you and no one else, Do Not Give Up! You are not alone in the struggle for equality, justice, and constitutional rights. If you see a wrong, report and file a grievance on it. The only reason most prisons get away with the way they are and do the screwed up things they do is because most of us do nothing about it. Write grievances, write newspapers, Senators, lawyers, family, and friends. Write the American Civil Liberties Union. Write and get the story out and publicly known. Most importantly, have the facts to back up your story and that means grievances, lawsuits, and your personal documentation of what’s been going on including dates, times, people involved, etc, etc.

I recommend everyone get this book: The Jailhouse Lawyer’s Handbook: How to Bring a Federal Lawsuit to Challenge Violations of Your Rights in Prison, published by the Center for Constitutional Rights and the National Lawyers Guild.

Prisoners in every state can use this handbook, whether in federal prison, city or county jails, and private prisons. Gives instructions on How and What to file in a federal and state lawsuit (as a “Section 1983” suit) for a number of issues such as mistreatment, conditions in prisons or jails, treatment by staff, Civil Rights actions, etc. Name and gender change and transgender issues too! 152 page handbook is free of charge by writing and requesting a copy to be sent to you at: Jailhouse Lawyers Handbook, c/o The Center for Constitutional Rights, 666 Broadway 7th Floor, New York, NY 10012

Keep up the fight yall.
Your brother in the struggle,
Steven, Oklahoma

High regards, Black & Pink Family and Volunteers,

Recently I have been receiving the B&P Newspaper on a regular basis. I like Jason’s revolutionary and progressive style. And I enjoy the letters from and to our collective family.

I have recently filed and litigated (to the best of my ability) a 42 U.S.C. 1983 Federal Civil Rights lawsuit in the Southern U.S. District Court, San Diego, CA, which seeks to improve and to enhance prison living conditions, housing, unique programs and appropriate classification of LBGTQI prisoners. However, the truth is that a Trans prisoner has little chance of obtaining any kind of justice without professional legal representation due mostly to the Prison Litigation Reform Act (PLRA) of 1996 signed into law by Democratic president, Bill Clinton. This oppressive and malevolent piece of legislation should be viciously attacked and repealed by all prisoner rights organizations and social minded organizations as well. This garbage piece of legislation, now law, allows prison administrators to easily deny any inmate to have a meritorious review of serious issues which may affect life and lives in the courts, both state courts and federal courts, by simply denying the inmate access to the prison grievance/appeal process, creating what is known in litigation circles as a procedural ban because due to the PLRA of 1996, for a prisoner to proceed to trial with his case he must show that he has had the issues of a complaint addressed at the highest level of the prison grievance process. And there is practically no change of creatively working one’s way around this requirement. This law must be exterminated for it is a pest of the highest sort!

Hey! Stay healthy, warm, and safe, and respect our Black & Pink family members, always. See ya!!
Sincerely and in solidarity,
Jim, California

Dear Black & Pink,

Hello to all family on the inside and out. I’m writing in response to a poem that was in the March 2014 issue titled “Don’t Let Them,” by Tigger in California. As I read the poem I was able to feel and understand the pain, because I have been there a time or two in my life. I currently have no one to love, which in it’s own way is a heartache all it’s own. But I write to tell you, you’re in my thoughts and hopes that you are re-united with your love, or find a love that will always be by your side.

Keep your head up,
Sincerely,
Beast, California

To all my Black & Pink family, to all those who know me, and my man, yes it’s me, ya girl “P.”

Yes! Here I am. Alive, still kicking and continuing giving them hell. For those who don’t know, they transferred me and put a separation on me and my man. Even so, we still riding hard, ‘cause that’s what I do best!

Our love is too strong and unbiased. They can’t understand how two people locked up behind bars, fences, and barbed wire can still walk around with a smile. But little did they know love is not simply the physical which they separated. They so jealous of what we have in prison and they don’t even have on the streets, yet these are the things they do.

Am I hurt? Most definitely, without a doubt. My man will always be my heart, my love, but never in a million years will I let them have the satisfaction. My head will be held high as long as there’s a swing in my walk, a sashay in my hips. The only time you’ll catch my head down is if I’m 6 feet under.

To my old squad/cliq: Give ‘em hell for ya girl. Ain’t sh** change. To h-i-m, Mr. man, my man/boo/daddy/etc, I love you, now, always, and 4-ever! To my sisters, brothers, and anyone unisex or otherwise, no matter what the situation is, keep your heads up! Never let them see you down. They in it for they self. They get a check. Well they ain’t gonna be making some change preying on me. Don’t show them your vulnerabilities. Make them work for they check. And until next time...

This ya girl Puddin, in Pennsylvania

Dear My Wonderful Black & Pink Family,

Greetings from a California State torture chamber. I have a real shocker to share.

Believe it or not, the California Prison System allows straight male inmates to verbally abuse transgender inmates. I have been forced out of my position as the only transgender inmate Peer Educator because I wouldn’t tolerate being verbally bullied by a straight Peer Educator.

He said HIV/AIDS is a punishment from God on all LGBT people and all non-LGBT people for their sins. Now remember, he is a Peer Educator who is supposed to teach others about how to be safe. How not to contract HIV, Hepatitis, the flu, cold, etc. How to take care of yourself if a person has any type of illness. Also, we teach awareness on the body and its functions.

He has referred to me as a deviant, demon possessed, evil, etc. I have HIV, have a husband of 13 years, and treat everyone with dignity regardless of their race, creed, color, religion, age, sexual orientation, etc. He doesn’t.

When I reported the bullying to my supervisor, she refused to do anything except to relieve me of my job position because I am “causing a hostile work environment.” Yet, no one has said that. It’s been the total opposite, inmates and staff a like have told her she is wrong and should not fire me, but the other guy.

So, I filed official complaints and she retaliated by writing me a rules violation report for causing a hostile workplace. All because I refuse to allow a straight man to bully me because I am transgender, HIV+, and a Christian/Interfaith minister with a doctorate in divinity who doesn’t conform to his view of a Christian.

This man believes women should be pregnant, barefoot, and in the kitchen. Obedient to a man, is what he says, what he wants, and what he demands. He also believes women are to be silent unless spoken to, hold no position in the church, etc.

So, what do you think about that, my B&P Family?

Finally, to all LGBTQ family members, as long as we don’t stand as one, we fail. We no longer teach our youth their roots. We have as a community an ancient and beautiful history. Well, not always beautiful, but rich. We have been priests, priestesses, doctors, medicine people, nannies, scouts, judges, rulers, law givers, prophets, etc. We were respected and cherished in many cultures. But, we had to fight at times to keep our culture alive. Don’t ever forget our forefathers and foremothers who gave their lives for us to live free.

Every family has problems, but for us in prison and jails we must stick together. Here is a rally call: “Remember Stonewall of 1969.” If we forget, then we have no right to have equal rights. God bless all of you.

Your Faithful Sister,
Rev. Dr. Kimberly J. M., California

Revolutionary Greetings!

This is written simply to spark a fire. The fire being that of future revolutionary organizing. For “drastic change calls for drastic measures.” And changing the mindstate of others who disagree with our way of life and sexuality is truly a drastic issue.

I am Field Secretary of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party--Prison Chapter (N.A.B.P.P.), and a few issues back, I recall someone speaking of a “Pink Panther Party.” If anyone has contact with these persons/party, I would like to be plugged in to them. If this is not an actual organizing initiative, than I would like to give the call for such party formation. This initiative can work with or be part of the N.A.B.P.P. and we can mobilize against our common oppressors!

I grew up in the streets as a member of a well known street-based organization. I traveled from Chicago to Atlanta to Houston to organize “hoods” into organized formations. Although our movement was street based, I can say it taught me many life lessons. At the age of 19 I was sentenced to 15 years in Ohio Dept of Rehabilitation and Corrections. A downfall you say!? No, the saying goes, “Oppression breeds resistance.” I was resurrected mentally and was able to build with Black Panthers- most notably, Minister of Information, Tom Big Warrior, who wrote me and sent me books and articles. Now, 10 years later I have recognized my errors and realized that my apprenticeship with the Vice Lord’s was to lead me to the cause of the New Afrikan Black Panther Party, which seeks to do away with all oppression, not limited to one community or group.

My individual transition from “self” to “nation” is what I envision the formation of a “Pink Panther Party” to be. I call all comrades interested to contact me. Free World people can go to my Facebook page Taaher Taher in Cincinnati, Ohio.

I’m due for an early release this year, so even then I will be able to do much more organizing and work for the movement. We have a lot on our hands and it falls on those who do not fear freedom, to win freedom...

All Power to the People!
Comrade Taaher, Ohio

According to the Wikipedia website, The Pink Panthers name has been used for several different LGBT rights organizations in North America since the 1970s... including a neighborhood watch founded by members of Queer Nation. The neighborhood watch group would patrol areas in NYC that had a large number of assaults on gay men. The most recent Pink Panther groups include: A small organization that does fundraisers to promote gay rights organizations; A militant, gay rights collective in Montreal, Quebec; and, A militant, gay rights organization active in Colorado and Wyoming.

Dear Black & Pink Family,

Greetings and Salutations to my Sisters and Brothers in our Black and Pink family!

My name is Aurora and I wish to talk about something close to my heart, on my mind, and in every issue of B&P I have received- Acceptance! My Family! I wish you to hear me, and hopefully understand.

These is an old saying: To thine own self be true. It is amazing how much that saying has kept me going. You have to accept yourself for who you are. For those of us out there who are afraid to come out to their people, be it family, friends, co-workers, classmates, or anyone in between- To thine own self be true! So long as you accept you, then no one else can shut you down or reject you because no one else matters at that point.

I would like to share part of my own story. I am a bi-sexual male-to-female woman. Though I haven’t taken hormones (yet), I am a woman. I have recently told my mother that I am bi-sexual, I figured I’d start with that, and that I am engaged to be married to a man. This was in October of last year. By the beginning of March, I still have not heard a word from her. At first, I was sad, and then angry, I mean, she’s my mom! She has to accept me, right? No. I have to accept me, and I do and that is what matters most. I stopped looking for acceptance from my mom because she couldn’t give it. The only person who can give you acceptance is you!

I encourage people to put away self doubt, put away fears, and whether you are 16 or 60, if you haven’t told your people and you can, come out! You may be happier once accepting yourself, at that point others who truly care for you will come to accept your happiness as well.

My husband-to-be accepts me and my Black & Pink family accepts me and I have friends who accept me. But the only one who can make me happy is me, so I accept me. To thine own self be true.

Peace and love to you all, may each and everyone of you find what she or he is looking for. I will leave you with a few other quotes:

“And the day came when the risk it took to remain tight inside the bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.” - Anaïs Nin



Comrade Taaher

“What lies behind us, and what lies before us, are tiny matters, compared to what lies within us.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson

“One just has to be one’s self. That’s my basic message. The moment you accept yourself, as you are all burdens, all mountainous burdens, simply disappear. Then life is a sheer joy, a festival of lights.” - Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh

Aurora, Colorado

Dear Black & Pink,

I always tend to mix them up, but it was either Judge Mathis or Brown that I was watching a few years ago. What was said made me pause and reflect- “In prison, you are one of two things- either predator or prey.”

That sentence is how I start this letter. Honestly, I’m not sure if there is a forum for what I’m about to write, but I share it with all of you because I have no other.

Both words seem horrible to me for I’ve always seen a Predator as the one that feeds off another’s weaknesses and Prey as a victim of some abuse. I didn’t have to reflect long to realize that I’ve become a Predator during my years of imprisonment.

When I entered prison at the age of 18, more than 30 years ago, I knew I must stand tall for I was sentenced to a minimum of 15 years and a max of life. Late in the night, while in my cell, I’d silently pray that I wouldn’t be the subject of another’s abuse. Older cons put me on point, right away, to those that were called “Booty Bandits.”

Throughout the years I’ve associated with these notorious men known for raping others. I have always felt a disgust as I looked them in the eyes, for the harm they rained upon others. I’ve always viewed rape as a horrible crime.

It has taken me a long while, but I’m now able to look in the mirror and realize that I am a Predator. I have never forcefully taken another’s sex, but am I any different because I’m a groomer?

I’ll befriend an attractive young man that has feminine qualities/ mannerisms according to my warped way of thinking. The grooming has begun! There are so many tactics, ploys, fears, etc, that I’ll instill in this person that I’ll be the only one in the entire prison that he’ll trust. I will seek out the littlest of weakness that he has and I’ll exploit them to the utmost degree.

In truth, I’m the last person he should trust, but he isn’t aware of this. You see, I will set it up where another strikes fear into him, and I will come along as his savior, making him that much more dependent upon me. By this time, the grooming process is in it’s late stages where he’ll soon believe serving as my sexual partner is easier than having to deal with the rest of the prison population.

I know I’m not much different than a “Booty Bandit.” I apply the twisted logic that “if he did not want it, he’d fight to stop it.” I know this is my warped way of manipulating my justifications. I do not need anyone to tell me how wrong I am for deep down, I know! I am that face behind the stories many hear about prison.

I guess I write this to you and your readers to warn them not to be fooled by the inviting smiles.

James, New York

Our LGBQ/T community holds many stories, stories of harm we have survived, and harm we have caused. Abuse and sexual assault happens in all communities. People and organizations like The Network/La Red in Massachusetts work specifically to end abuse in LGBQ/T communities. B&P seeks to abolish prisons because they do not prevent harm, they are harm us directly, and they create situations where people harm each other. Let’s work together to build a world of safety and liberation!

To the LGBT Community,

I love each and every one of you. Regardless of size, race, looks, or any other description, rather it be good or bad. From my time reading B&P, the letters and viewing the art, I noticed the pain, but I don’t see the solution-Unity. Let’s have community unity and unbiased respect and embracing of others who are like us (I’m including those on the DL or AKA straight guys who are just dabbling.)

It is time we all stand, this is 2014. We have come a long way, we can be proud to be gay and a part of this historic movement. (You can even do it on the DL if you want). Let’s take action, not just seek to gratify our own goals and desires, let’s help others of our likeness in our prison or in our neighborhood. There are so many just like us, if we stood together, instead of living in biased segregation and fear. I make it my business to meet every gay on the yard and let them know I am in their corner. My saying is: Don’t ask what your community can do for you, ask what can you do for your community. That is an old quote revised/edited but it’s true. Fact is, if we do for each other then it will help us all grow as a whole and make our personal lives much better and normal. It will also show people that we love and respect each other, that will make them respect us. I see people being too segmented, it’s cool to have a special someone, but we as gays have to realize that a community is everlasting. No matter how good the sex is, we also need our community strength. Got out and meet our gay family.

Congrats to all the barriers we are breaking down daily. Congrats to Michael Sams our gay brother, first one Out in the NFL Draft. There are so many more who want to come out that will if only they see it’s safe to do so. We can continue to pave the way. Those of us who are strong enough, fight! If you are more of a discreet person, then give discreet assistance. Do this and we can build this house. Gaypower!

James aka M.Jeezy, Texas

STRUGGLING FOR RIGHTS!
EDITORIAL: CONNECTICUT WRONG TO IMPRISON
TRANSGENDER TEEN ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED ON *NEW HAVEN REGISTER*

The ongoing mistreatment of a 16-year-old transgender girl in state custody is raising serious questions about civil rights, human rights and Connecticut’s approach to troubled children.

“Jane Doe” has spent more than a week at the York Correctional Institute — in solitary confinement, she says, 22 to 23 hours a day alone in a cell.

Solitary confinement is an inhumane and counterproductive approach even for adults. To use it in the case of a child who does not belong in an adult prison in the first place is beyond alarming.

The teen in question is under the care of the Connecticut Department of Children and Families. It got her transferred to York using an obscure state law allowing courts to transfer a “dangerous minor” in state custody to an adult prison even if they have not been charged as an adult with any crime.

“I can feel myself growing more and more isolated, frustrated, and feeling alone in my current isolation,” Jane wrote to the court in a letter from prison. “I need to be given treatment and services specific to my needs. I need to deal with the trauma I’ve experienced in my life. This prison cannot do that for me.”

That trauma, according to CTMirror.org, has included being “raped dozens of times” by age 15, being “sold for sex, beaten up and addicted to crack cocaine.”

These things happened despite first coming under care of DCF as a young child “because her family members were incarcerated, sexually abusive or addicted to drugs.”

Transgender youth are also at exponentially greater risk of discrimination and bullying, physical and mental abuse, psychological issues and suicide.

DCF says it can’t deal with Jane Doe any longer, citing “an extensive history of violence” that has included stabbing another teen with a fork and 10 assaults on staff while at a children’s psychiatric facility run by the state. She is 16 years old, has had a horrific life, and DCF has failed repeatedly to protect her. Who could be surprised that she would have serious issues?

So why is the state throwing this child away instead of pursuing intensive treatment?

We strongly suspect that the answer lies with underlying bias against her gender identity. And in the process, the state of Connecticut appears to be violating an anti-discrimination law protecting transgender people that Gov. Dannel P. Malloy signed in 2011.

The state has been inconsistent with Jane Doe. Before being moved to the York women’s adult prison, according to CTNewsJunkie.com, she was housed “in female living sections at child detention centers and DCF facilities, or in isolation at male facilities.”

Legislators have questioned why DCF would not be treating her in a new locked facility for girls in Middletown that the agency specifically got funded to deal with similarly violent or challenging cases.

Its past decisions to house Jane at boys’ facilities, and a loaded statement that placing her at the Middletown facility might endanger “female staff,” signal an underlying bias against Jane’s gender identity.

Connecticut’s Department of Correction has maintained a policy of placing transgender people according to their biological gender. In that environment, someone who identifies as female could be forced to look and behave like a male, leading to potentially “severe psychological consequences.”

But Michael Lawlor, Malloy’s undersecretary for criminal justice, has acknowledged that the stated reasons for maintaining that stance are thin and likely conflict with the 2011 law. The Department of Correction probably could overcome challenges associated with determining who is “legitimately transgender,” he said, and Connecticut might change its policy.

In the meantime, this child — our child, because she is in the care of the state — needs help, not isolation in a prison cell. If her civil rights and human rights can be violated in this way, it puts everyone’s rights at risk

5 STORIES OF LGBT PEOPLE BEING UNFAIRLY TREATED
BY THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM BY ZACK FORD
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED ON *THINK PROGRESS*

A new report released Wednesday offers a comprehensive list of recommendations for reforming the criminal justice system to protect the LGBT people and people living with HIV who are disproportionately impacted by it. Woven into the report are many personal stories that demonstrate how those disparities play out. Here are five of them:

Policing Gender

Rev. Jason Lydon, who writes at Black and Pink, explains how he saw a court officer profile a transgender woman:

In October 2013, I was accompanying a transgender woman to a court date for a default warrant in New Bedford, Massachusetts. When her name was called and she was brought before the judge they placed her in cuffs and sent her into the holding area before they could go forward with the probation violation hearing. When the court officer brought her into the holding area he asked her, “are you a man or a woman?” When she responded that she was a woman he grabbed her genitals and said, “women don’t have dicks.”

While she was crying he called her names and continued to make

comments about her breasts and genitals. All of this was reported to me after the incident as she was allowed to return home because she was already on a GPS unit. There was no one else around watching the court officer. The individual who was assaulted did not want any reports filed or comments made to the court because she was fearful that it would result in her getting in more trouble, possibly getting locked up in jail again, or having another incident of being alone with another court officer.

Criminalizing Condoms

Streetwise and Safe is an organization in New York City that helps LGBT youth of color know how best to interact with the police. Trina, a youth leader for the organization, shares a story about how she was profiled as a sex worker simply for being transgender and carrying condoms:

The practice of using condoms in prostitution related offenses affects my community, LGBT young people, because we are often profiled as being engaged in the sex trades. One time, I was going to a kiki ball on a Saturday night in the West Village. I was standing on the street talking with some friends and an officer approached me. She asked me for my ID. I gave it to her. At that time I didn’t have my name legally changed. She not only would not call me by my real name, but she kept calling me a man and a faggot. She took a picture of my ID and sent it to the 6th precinct. The dispatcher told her that my record was clear but instead of letting me go, she said she wanted to see in my purse. I didn’t know my rights then or I would have not consented to the search. I thought I had to show her the contents of my purse.

When she looked inside, she saw two condoms. She called the precinct back and asked for a police car to come. I asked her, “Why are you locking me up? I can’t carry condoms?” She replied, “You are getting locked up for prostitution.” I was taken to the precinct and put in with the men. I was 17 years old. This is my story but this is also the story of many of my friends who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender, young, and of color. When the police take our condoms or lock us up for carrying condoms, they are putting our lives at risk. How am I supposed to protect myself from HIV and STIs when I am scared to leave my house with condoms in my purse? For my community, it is not only being put at risk for HIV, STIs, and unwanted pregnancies, but having to be harassed and assaulted by police officers for being transgender or queer.

Transgender Discrimination In Prisons

Janetta Johnson now serves as Program Coordinator for the Transgender, Gender Variant, and Intersex Justice Project, but she once spent some time in federal prison on a drug charge. She explains how unsafe she felt as a black trans woman in a men’s prison:

I spent three and a half years in federal prison on a drug charge. As a black trans woman, I experienced sexual violence while in prison. I was put in blatantly dangerous housing situations where officials knew I would be taken advantage of. When I went to tell the prison staff that the guy that I was in the cell with had several times fondled my breast when I tried to sleep, I was told that if I reported the assault the only place he could house me was in the SHU, which is isolation. I knew that being housed in the SHU would prevent me from participating in the drug program that was allowing me to qualify for early release and I would not be able to attend school programs that I was involved in.

I chose to keep quiet about what was happening to me so that I could be part of the program and be released from prison 18 months early. No one should have to make the choice between enduring a longer prison sentence or being sexually assaulted. It was one of those things that I felt caused me so much pain and helplessness—a hard decision to make but I learned to shut my mouth and do the best I could just to stay strong. I was even afraid to talk about it via mail or phone where I was housed because they listened to your phone calls closely.

Distrusting Youth

A 2009 report called Hidden Injustice examined the way LGBT youths are treated in the juvenile justice system. Here’s an excerpt about how young transgender people experienced identity policing:

[A]n attorney from the South represented a male-to-female (MTF) transgender youth who was detained in a boys’ facility. The youth’s “treatment plan” stated that she was to receive “help with gender confusion and appropriate gender identity,” which included staff prohibiting her from growing her hair out or having any feminine accessories.

The same attorney reported that another client—a gender non-conforming lesbian—had a similar treatment plan “even though she fully accept[ed] that she [wa]s a female, fe[lt] that she [wa]s a female, and seemed to have no confusion about her gender.” In another case, a mental health evaluator encouraged the court and facility staff to help a transgender youth, who had been diagnosed with GID, to understand that it was not appropriate to “act like a girl” while incarcerated in a boy’s facility.

Criminalizing HIV

Despite great advances in research about HIV, myths abound about how the virus can be transmitted. David Plunkett describes how his life fell apart after he was convicted for aggravated assault for attacking a police officer with “HIV infected saliva”:

On September 18, 2006 I was jailed and eventually sentenced to a ten-year state prison term for aggravated assault on a police officer with a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument. According to the county Supreme Court the deadly weapon was my “HIV infected saliva”. After a six year fight through the court system the charge was vacated by the New York State Court of Appeals, and I was released. After my arrest I lost many things I had worked hard for:

Continued on Page 8....



BEAUTIFUL

By Kris, Florida

From the moment I laid eyes on you
there was no doubt in my mind
that you were the one for me
As if God knew exactly what I wanted
and made you a reality
Just the image of your pretty smile
touched me deep
Like that hidden nerve in every heart
that only responds
to the vibration of beauty
I only know a little about you
just a name and a face
But I will willingly give you my heart
to do as you please
just to prove to you
that no one can take your place
So if this is the last time we will ever meet
I would like you to remember
that a sunrise only lasts for a moment
But beauty burns in our heart
Eternally

Imani, North Carolina

MOMMA

Dear Momma, I know you weren't happy here.
Your life was hard and never too fair,
But don't worry; if no one else does, I'll shed a tear.
And don't fear the last breath,
God's love is what lies in your chest.
And now that you're on your way, what more can they say?
Better night and brighter days,
God's kingdom is like the Sun's blaze,
It's a lifetime of Sundays with your arms raised and your heart full
of praise.

Charlemagne, Texas

THE LIGHT OF OUR GREAT SPIRIT

Let us be proud to be who we are,
Whether we are black, pink, circle or square,
Locked up or free WE will be,
With our head held high, we will strive and survive,
As our sister Brielle in Louisiana said,
"Still I stand and never will I fall,"
Let that be the call to oppression, depression, hatred,
Alienation, discrimination, loneliness, and fear,
Loving ourselves let us be proud to be queer.
Brothers and Sisters, let us rise,
Letting the loves for our lives shine,
Like a beacon of light, A thousand suns,
Rising to the sky at once.

A light of our great spirit. Zarabee, California

LOVE'S ASHES

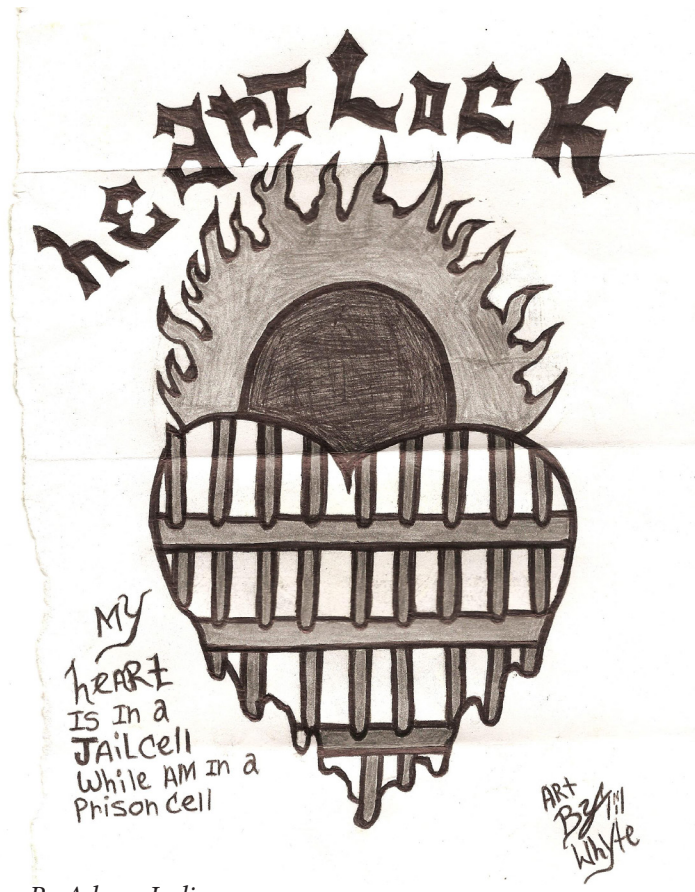
Even mountains alter with ages
and time's corrosive winds keep blowing.
'Nor is love immune to changes;
--Expressions of eternal passion don't believe
Like a burned out star, we still perceive--
Thus I love forever, in a moment.
Not assuming to believe
That love isn't a scorching comet
Burning ardently,
Creating ashes as it passes
Ashes lovingly,
Blown by time's corrosive winds
Until gathering together again.

Kat, Arizona

TRUTH BY THIS SPECIES OF PROPERTY

We're locked up, doing time for things we didn't do
We're locked away, for things that certainly aren't true
It was self-defense! Swear to god it's how I felt
The life of a slave is too much weight for my belt
See I was raised by the system, even trained by the system
Now I'm being blamed for their insisting
It's kind of ironic
This illness we have is chronic
Centuries of desensitized brains
Government developed pains
Slave mentalities instilled from the date of our birth
Leading us to believe we've chosen our worths
But it's all a mirage- a psychological barrage
Meant for distraction
To lead our attentions away from their actions
Which are the same as ours
Made legal by their state and federal laws
Just let me explain
We all have choices but who do we blame
It's an obvious matter!
Just look at the patterns
A sensei teaches the pupil what they know
But holds back enough to keep in control
A teacher or coach, teaches their students strategies,
On how to defeat their enemies
Before long it's not just learned
But a part of your anatomy instinctively served
Psychological breeding in it's purest form
Passed on and on to generations born
Leaving them with no option to think
Destined from the start to sink
Men-tally locked away doing time behind untruth
Past down making innocents pay
Giving them internal time to do
And that's the truth, by this species of property

Markiesha Keisha B, Texas



By Adam, Indiana

Penpal Suggestion Summary (February) - 17 Responses

What should people who want to write an incarcerated B&P member keep in mind when they write to you?

Thanks for your insightful suggestions! Sample responses:

“Don’t be afraid to really open up and tell us about yourself. We’re still people, and we crave connections with others too. If this is just a trial/temp thing, be upfront about it. A lot of us don’t get much mail and are grateful for what we do get. The most important thing is to just be yourself.”

“Be honest about what type of correspondence you are looking to engage in (upfront), whether it be personal (platonic or romantic), legal/activist-oriented, networking, card-sharing, gift-giving etc, any combo of the above.”

“Be honest about how often you can write.”

“Understand that because of the U.S. Legal system’s class discrimination... the prisoner you would write to is probably poor which could lead to some common problems, such as A) Free world people offering money and books in their initial letters when they don’t really mean it, giving false hope to the prisoner, and B) prisoners thinking they have to “play” you for money instead of just being honest.”

“Advice on how to handle the issue of money: A) Decide before you write to a prisoner whether or not you can/will assist them with money. Overall, be clear and direct about this.”

“Realize that a lot of us are going through living hell in here, isolated and cut off from family and friends, so a lot of times we will write and just need to “vent.” It’s ok don’t panic ... Some of us are just so cut off we just want to be heard and have a friend to talk to. A lot of us want to get involved in gay rights and activism... and may not know how. Help us help others when possible.”

ON THE INSIDE ARTWORK FORM

Black & Pink is facilitating the revival of the art program in a new way, called On the Inside! If you are an artist, here’s how it will work. Create any artwork that you would like (drawings, cards, paintings). We are seeking art drawn in ball point pen or pencil on letter-sized copy paper. The exhibit is taking shape along the following themes: portraits, self-portraits, spirituality, erotic, love, advocacy, gender, pop culture, celebrities, sports cars, crime & punishment, and prison life. Some of the artwork will be accepted for an upcoming exhibit; the artist will be promptly compensated \$50 for all accepted artwork (except \$10 for cards) and postage expenses incurred. Any artwork that isn’t accepted for the exhibit for any reason will be promptly returned to the artist, or other address. If your artwork is accepted for the Exhibition, you assign all right, title and interest in the work to us (in other words you transfer ownership of the art and its copyrights to the Exhibit coordinators) as consideration for participation in the show. The artwork will never be resold, and will likely be donated to an LGBTQ Archive in years to come. **Please do not write your name and number anywhere on the front of the artwork to protect your privacy. We are all excited to see what you create! Please fill out a questions 1 through 6 once, and questions 7 through 10 on separate slip like this for each piece of artwork you submit. Please mail the artwork with the information below on slips to: On the Inside, PO Box 173, 2658 Griffith Park Blvd. , Los Angeles, CA 90039**

- 1)Your preferred name for the exhibit. We will only include the first initial of your last name in the exhibit.
- 2)Your gender pronouns (eg. she / he / xe / they).
- 3)How do you identify? (Optional: gender, sexuality, race, age).
- 4)Your legal name, number, and mailing address.
- 5)If my artwork is not accepted for the exhibit:
 - __ Send it to my address (please list)
 - __ Send it to another address (please list)
 - __ Black & Pink can keep and display it
- 6)Preferred method of compensation:
 - __ Donation into commissary account (Please include deposit slips or instructions):
 - __ Magazines/books (Details)
 - __ Other:
- 7)Title of artwork (for display at exhibit).
- 8)Description of artwork (for display at exhibit).
- 9)Anything else you’d like the exhibit curator to know about the artwork or about yourself which can be shared / feel free to write on another page, and please note that the exhibit curator is not able to be a penpal):

BLACK & PINK INCARCERATED FAMILY FEEDBACK! MAIL TO: Black & Pink - FEEDBACK Dorchester, MA 02125 -----rip slip here-----

Who do you admire in LGBTQ History and why?_____

“When you can and if it is not too much, send pictures!”

“Be Honest, Be True, Be Real, and Be You. Know your Boundaries, respect yourself first and foremost... and understand yourself first to better understand others.”

Advocacy Campaign for Trans-women (ACT!)

Started by Jennifer Gann, Black & Pink California Prison Chapter Leader
Black & Pink has led an advocacy campaign on my behalf over the past year concerning the discrimination, sexual harassment, and legitimate safety concerns I have experienced as a transgender woman in a men’s prison. We made complaints to the warden, and the California Dept of Corrections & Rehabilitation (CDCR).

In response to our letters and complaints, prison officials at Kern Valley State Prison (KVSP) retaliated against me with bogus disciplinary reports (RVR’s), “loss” of some of my personal property items, and Ad-Seg placement (ASU) back in June 2013. The Office of Internal Affairs (OIA) declined to investigate our specific allegations or take action.

Because of the lack of appropriate response by CDCR prison officials, the deliberate indifference shown in regard to sexual harassment, and unsafe housing of transgender inmates in general, I have decided to take my own personal struggle and start a statewide initiative called the Advocacy Campaign for Trans-women, or “ACT!” We demand:

- Safe housing for all trans-women prisoners.
 - Adequate transition-related medical and mental health care (e.g. hormones, mental health specialists, and sex-reassignment surgery).
 - An end to gender identity discrimination and sex-stereotyping (quit telling us to “act like a man”).
 - End abusive and inappropriate cross-gender and group strip searches.
 - Investigate and take seriously claims of sexual harassment, retaliation, and staff misconduct.
 - Provide access to gender appropriate clothing (bras, skirts, blouses, underwear, etc) and feminine hygiene/beauty products (e.g. brushes, make-up, hair ties, etc).
- Continued on Page 8...*

LESLIE FEINBERG INTERVIEWS SYLVIA RIVERA ‘I’M GLAD I WAS IN THE STONEWALL RIOT’ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Now they’re taking away food stamps. These people who want the cuts-these people are making millions and millions and millions of dollars as CEOs.

Why is the government going to take it away from us? What they’re doing is cutting us back. Why can’t we have a break?

I’m glad I was in the Stonewall riot. I remember when someone threw a Molotov cocktail, I thought: “My god, the revolution is here. The revolution is finally here!”

I always believed that we would have a fight back. I just knew that we would fight back. I just didn’t know it would be that night.

I am proud of myself as being there that night. If I had lost that moment, I would have been kind of hurt because that’s when I saw the world change for me and my people.

Of course, we still got a long way ahead of us.

Copyright Workers World Service

THE OUT FOR CHANGE: TRANSFORMATIVE MEDIA ORGANIZING PROJECT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

We could also let folks on our listserve know about it! We <3 B&P and are grateful for their vision and leadership, and for the courage of everyone surviving the PIC!

Susana, Esperanza Peace and Justice Center (TX)

We have a monthly publication that is mailed to about 500 prisoners called “La Voz de Esperanza.” Sometimes those same prisoners or their friends, who read the same issue, send in articles related to the prison industrial complex. We also offer volunteer opportunities for court appointed community service hours to be done around our cultural programming and in community organizing. We could publish an ad or are willing to accept an article to our monthly publication of “La Voz” to solicit pen pals and to inform our readership about Black and Pink.

Sasha, MIT Center for Civic Media (Boston)

A graduate student at the Center for Civic Media helped create betweenthebars.org, a project to allow prisoners to create blogs via letters. It would be great to have a B&P connection with betweenthebars get more visible. This is amazing. Thank you so much for everything you do!

T, Sage Community Health Collective (Chicago)

We have space, volunteers, and could co-create ways to involve our community by hosting writing days, helping with postage, providing space for mutual support. We can definitely include B&P info in our newsletter, I would love someone to share via our blog, and we can totes share via Twitter, FB. THANK YOU!!! <3 Would someone like to write a piece for our blog/newsletter to intro B&P to our folks?

Derwin, BreakOUT! (New Orleans)

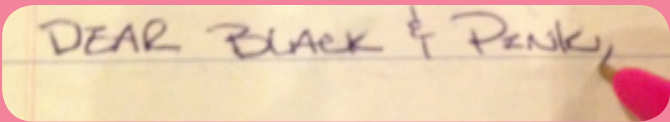
By encouraging our members who are incarcerated and others to become pen pal partners as well as hosting letter writing parties. Thank you for doing this!!! <3 We just visited an incarcerated member this past Sunday but could use more support on maintaining communication with letter writing/low tech methods. Thanks again! This has made my day!

Sean-Michael, AZ Trans Alliance (AZ):

This is HOW/Regina House, a non profit in Phoenix, AZ works to help transgender and gender variant people stay off the street. Also some of us are

ADDRESSES: PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESSES FOR MAIL!

Please Note: You can send multiple requests/topics in one envelope! Due to concerns about consent and confidentiality, you cannot sign up other people for the newspaper. However, we can accept requests from multiple people in the same envelope. There’s no need to send separate requests in more than one envelope. If you are being released and would still like to receive a copy of the newspaper, please let us know the address we can send the newspaper to!

	Black & Pink - _____ 614 Columbia Rd Dorchester, MA 02125
If you would like to request:	Please write one or more of these topics in the top line of the address:
Newspaper Subscriptions, Pen-Pal Program, Address Change, Request Erotica, Religious Support & Volunteering (Send thank you cards to donors, etc.)	Black & Pink - General
Newspaper Submissions- Stories, Articles, Poems &Art	Black & Pink - Newspaper Submissions
Black & Pink Organization Feedback- Especially the slip on Page 7	Black & Pink - Feedback
Advocacy Requests- Include details about situation and thoughts about how calls or letters might help	Black & Pink - Advocacy
Submit to Erotica Zine	Black & Pink - HOT PINK
Stop Your Newspaper Subscription	Black & Pink – STOP Subscription

Pen Pal Program: LGBTQ prisoners can list their information and short non-sexual ad on the internet where free world people can see it and decide to write. There will be a Pen-Pal Request Form in the Newspaper every 4 months.

pen pals through a local efforts started by Puente, or a local woman. I’d love to find out how to get a partnership between B&P and locals who are working on similar penpal projects.

5 STORIES OF LGBT PEOPLE BEING UNFAIRLY TREATED BY THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

I lost my business, my home, and most importantly my reputation. I have had to start my life all over, and finding employment has been impossible with the nature of the alleged crime. This has followed me right up to today: I have found myself having to explain my criminal history over and over again, from applying for housing to registering for classes at my local college.

I remain on parole until this coming September, this has created an even bigger burden finding employment – I am not allowed to leave my small county without my parole officer’s permission, I cannot drive, and I am under a 9:00 pm curfew. I lost my private insurance while incarcerated. This has forced me to rely on Medicare and Medicaid – finding physicians now that can care for my health needs and obtain the medications I need is a continuing battle. All these things are a consequence of being charged with an HIV related crime. At 43 years old I never imagined how different my life would be because of my arrest and incarceration. I also never realized the stigma attached to those with HIV and especially those who also have a criminal record. From then until now I should have been able to focus on my health and career, not battling a system that incarcerates those who live with a chronic illness, and remain uninformed about the nature and transmission of the HIV virus.

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN FOR TRANS-WOMEN (ACT!) CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

- Provide regular, mandatory training to all correctional employees by qualified outside community groups to increase awareness of transgender and intersex issues, including appropriate and professional communication (e.g. preferred name and pronouns).

I currently have complaints also pending with the CDCR Ombudsman and the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). This is a last ditch effort to resolve some of the problems I’ve continued to experience in the men’s facilities. My next step is a federal civil rights lawsuit.

I welcome my sisters in the men’s and women’s facilities to get involved. Women and Queers Unite! Abolish prisons and patriarchy!

Jennifer Gann, California

Let’s do it! Jenni can’t write with other people in prison. If you are in prison, you can write to B&P with the subject line: “Black & Pink- ACT!” to get involved. If you are in the Free World, see the B&P website for Jenni’s address to get in touch and support the Advocacy Campaign for Trans-women.

FEDERAL BOARD OVERTURNS MEDICARE EXCLUSION OF TRANSITION-RELATED CARE

From National Center for Transgender Equality May 30, 2014 - An independent board within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services today ruled that a Medicare policy from 1989 that categorically excluded transition-related medical procedures, regardless of medical need, is unreasonable and invalid based on today’s medical science.